

National Adaptation Forum

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# Informing Decision-Making + Seattle's highest water level on record

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# Climate program focus

## Water Supply



## Urban Drainage + Wastewater



## Sea Level Rise



# Climate program objectives

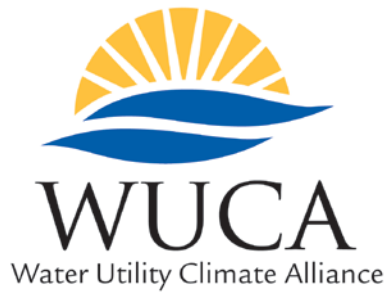
- Enhance our knowledge
- Establish collaborative partnerships
- Influence our operating environment
- Engage the science
- Assess impacts
- **Inform decision-making**
- Develop adaptation options
- Enhance system resiliency
- Reduce our contribution

# Water Utility Climate Alliance

43 million drinking water customers



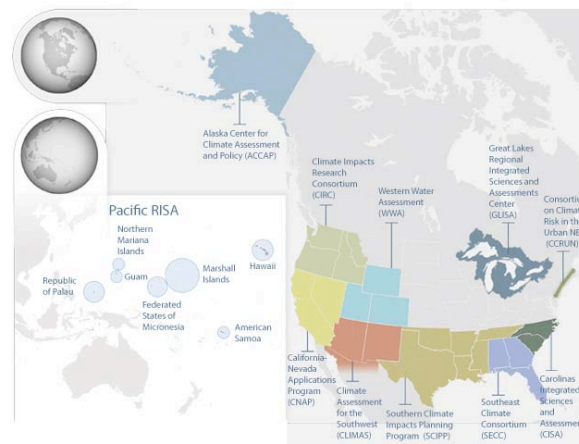
***Mission:** The Water Utility Climate Alliances provides leadership in assessing and adapting to the potential effects of climate change through collaborative action. We seek to enhance the **usefulness of climate science** for the adaptation community and improve water management **decision-making in the face of climate uncertainty.***



U.S. Global Change Research Program

# National Climate Assessment

Currently Funded RISAs



**International  
Water Association**



Seattle  
Public  
Utilities

# Informing Decision-Making – Points of Intervention

- How to leverage external activities to inform internal decision-making
- “Climate smart mindset incorporates climate change analysis into *strategic* and *operational* decision-making”
- Would also include:
  - operating environment
  - planning
  - project/program design
  - capacity building

## Global Risks 2013 Eighth Edition

An Initiative of the Risk Response Network





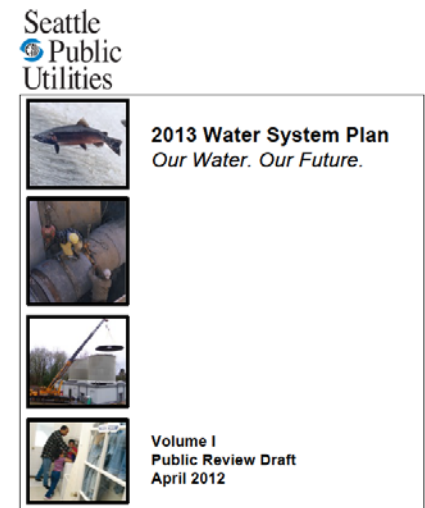
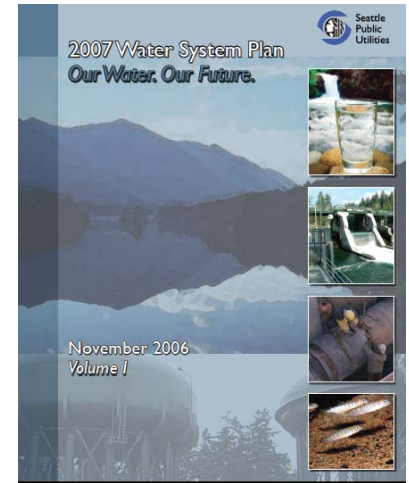
# Strategic

- Mayor's Executive Order on Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Calls for six-fold increase in amount of stormwater managed with GSI
- “flexibility and resilience...to prepare for uncertainties of climate change”



# Planning

- State-mandated water system plan
- Venue for articulating analysis of climate impacts on our supply
- Expectation that climate change is now a feature of the plan

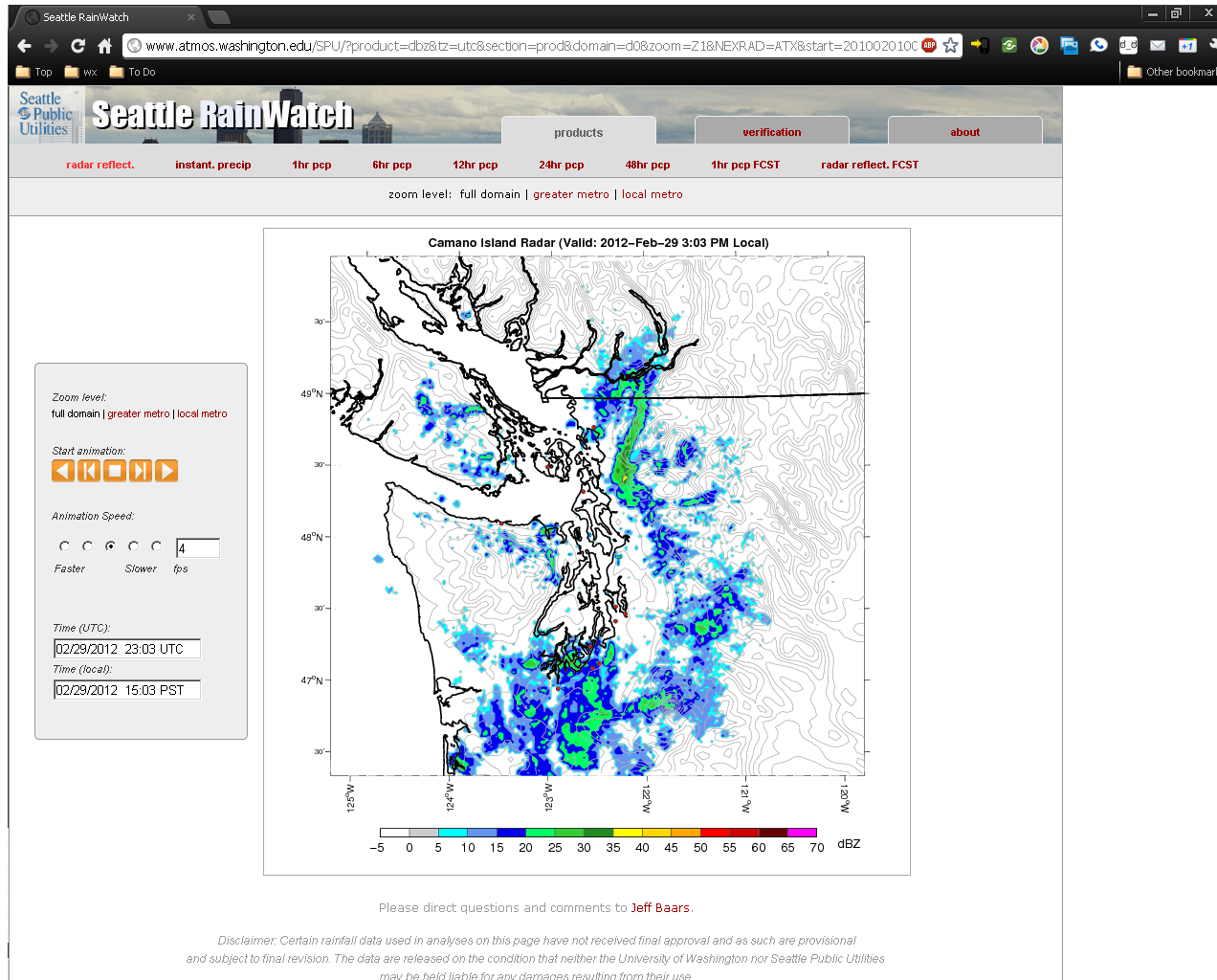




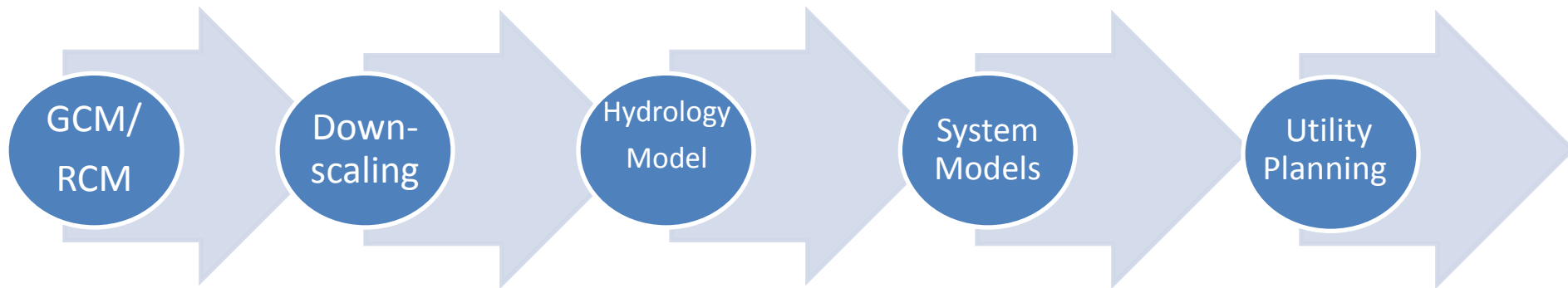
# Project/program design

- Stage Gates – asset management approach to rationalize capital investments with O&M
- Series of explicit steps all projects of a certain size have to take
- Moving towards including a climate module

# Operational



# Building internal capacity





# 12/17/12 King Tide Event

- Contributing factors
  - Low pressure – 980mb
  - Strong winds – 30mph sustained
- Countervailing factors
  - low levels of precip
  - peak wind and low pressure off cycle with apex of tide
- Set record for highest water level
- 100 properties flooded

# 12/17/12 King Tide Event Outcomes

- **Attention grabber**
  - Seattle Times article about how climate change will redraw our shores
- **Teachable moment**
  - City agencies gained greater understanding of king tides, implications of slr
  - Greater engagement from Human Services Dept
- **Role definition**
  - Sorting out response roles between SPU, Police, Fire, Office of Emergency Management





Thank You

